



STATE OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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April 13, 2010

TO: Charese Moore

FROM: Jim Schmidt

SUBJECT: Washington State Response to Request for Additional Information Regarding IES Grant Application

1. Please provide a more detailed explanation of how the data would be used, particularly at the local level, and connect this detailed explanation to your current outcomes and timeline tasks.

An emphasis of the Evergreen State P-20 (ESP-20) project will be to make longitudinal student data available to policy-makers, individual schools, researchers and the public. In general, this information will be disseminated via feedback reports at the local or institutional level and research data sets that will be made available. Those two approaches will be augmented by research briefs as well as training and outreach intended to expand the scope of data use and awareness of data availability.

The feedback reports (outcome 2.1 in the proposal) will be designed to show aggregate outcomes for students transitioning out of and between education sectors. While some of this type of reporting has been done sporadically for certain localities or sub-groups, ESP-20 will enable summary reports to be produced comprehensively and efficiently. For example, outcomes of high-school students can be tracked: what proportion enroll in post-secondary education, stay enrolled, graduate, require remedial coursework, or become employed? Information will be reported for all students, both those who graduate and those who do not, and can be disaggregated by characteristics such as race/ethnicity, grade point average, or high school course-taking. Similar reports will be generated for higher education institutions by tracking transfers, completions and employment outcomes.

Pending data governance discussions and agreements, the reports will be made available publicly online or securely to high schools or districts, possibly via the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction reporting portal. The approach for reports to higher education institutions will be similar.

The feedback report data could be used at various levels to prompt interventions for educational improvement. For example, college outcomes associated with high school math course-taking patterns might be observed, triggering policy changes. Similarly, targeted local level interventions might be provoked by findings that, when compared to a comparable school, one high school's students are less likely to be successful in college math. By producing student outcome summaries on a statewide and local scale, ESP-20 will enable policy-makers, local level administrators, and teachers to have concrete information on student achievement spanning educational sectors and into the workforce.

In addition to the feedback reports, information will also be shared in the form of research data sets (outcome 2.3). The data sets will enable state agencies and other researchers to analyze program effectiveness and other educational issues by using a full array of longitudinal student-level information. Similarly, the proposed research briefs (outcome 2.2) will provide transition and outcome information at a greater depth than the feedback reports. The research briefs will examine trends and patterns for key areas thought to affect student achievement.

To enhance use of the data products described above, training and outreach (outcome 2.4) will be incorporated into the project. ERDC or project staff will attend Washington education-related conferences and visit Educational Service Districts and post-secondary institutions to communicate the capabilities of ESP-20 to teachers, principals, administrators and policy-makers. At the same time, staff will gather input regarding data elements and student outcomes that ought to be included in the feedback reports.

The social services data-to-information project (outcome 2.5) will enable social service program managers to follow client outcomes and to evaluate the success of specific programs and interventions. By having comprehensive longitudinal information that joins education data with social service client data, Department of Social and Health Services managers can analyze the educational outcomes of youth receiving treatments such as mental health and chemical dependency. The studies within this project will directly affect managers' abilities to evaluate program effectiveness.

Timeline

The timeline for these outcomes are in Section (6)(c) of the proposal, and are summarized here specifically with respect to having the data products in the hands of data users. The timeline assumes a July 2010 start date.

2.1 Feedback Reports

(a) K-12. Interim reports will be disseminated to schools or districts by September 2011. ERDC will have solicited local and state-level input on the data measures to be included and sought input on findings and format of the reports. Final reports will be produced by June 2013.

“Final” refers to the data source; they will be created directly from the newly developed data warehouse.

(b) Baccalaureate institutions. Interim reports will be distributed to the institutions and the Council of Presidents by March 2012. Final reports generated from the data warehouse will be produced by June 2013.

(c) Community and technical college reports. Interim reports will be distributed to the colleges and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges by September 2012. Final reports generated from the data warehouse will be produced by June 2013.

2.2 Research Briefs

(a) Outcomes of high school dropouts – December 2010

(b) Extended longitudinal tracking of high school students’ outcomes – March 2011

(c) Teachers and employment transitions – June 2011

(d) Teacher characteristics related to school and student characteristics – September 2011

(e) Outcomes of college and university drop-outs and stop-outs – December 2011

2.3 Research Data Sets

-- Interim / preliminary flat-file data sets –April 2011

-- More comprehensive data sets available (ongoing / evolving) – January 2012 – June 2013

2.4 Training and Outreach

This will be an ongoing effort through the duration of the grant period.

The information produced by ESP-20 will evolve and become more comprehensive and efficient throughout the grant period. Additional data sources will be incorporated and the number of years of data will increase. By making information available on student outcomes as soon as feasible and sharing the findings with teachers, local-level administrators, state-level policy makers and researchers, ESP-20 will promote data-driven decision-making.

2. There is a need to consider a more formal governance plan. An oversight advisory group involving other stakeholders outside of the participating agencies would strengthen the management and governance plan. At present, this feedback appears to be ad hoc, e.g., comments gleaned at meetings of the Washington Education Research Association. Please respond.

In terms of data governance, House Bill 2261, 2009 Legislature, assigned data governance responsibilities to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and to the Education Research and Data Center (ERDC). Since both agencies were funded for this effort by the state, the data governance work described below in “Current Status and Plans” is not a part of the grant request but will be instrumental in guiding the work of ERDC in terms of defining the requirements and capabilities of Evergreen State P-20 (ESP-20).

Within the management plan, this project includes oversight by the state’s Department of Information Services (DIS) Information Services Board (ISB), which includes legislators and chief information officers from all sectors of government.

While working on the grant request, ERDC contacted and formed relationships with numerous stakeholders outside of the state's education agencies to solicit input for the proposal. These same groups will be asked to serve on the P-20 Data Governance Group. Many of these stakeholders are represented in Appendix D, Letters of Support.

Current Status and Plans: K-12 and P-20 Data Governance in Washington

OSPI formed a K-12 Data Governance work group that addresses financial, student, and educator data within the K-12 system. The group includes members from OSPI, ERDC, the Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program (LEAP) Committee, the Professional Educator Standards Board, the State Board of Education, and school district staff, including Information Technology staff. In addition, the group includes representatives of organizations that use K-12 data, including the Center for Strengthening the Teacher Profession, the Center for School Effectiveness, Washington Institute for Public Policy, and the Washington Education Association. A new Data Governance Coordinator is responsible for the coordination of the group.

The Data Governance Group is charged with identifying critical research and policy questions that K-12 data systems shall address. The group is to:

- Determine new reporting needs—identify the reports and other information that meet user needs.
- Create a comprehensive needs requirement document detailing the specific information and technical capacity needed by school districts and the state.
- Conduct a gap analysis of current and planned information.
- Focus on financial and cost data necessary to support the new K-12 financial models and funding formulas.
- Define the operating rules and governance structure for K-12 data collection.

The K-12 Data Governance Group has held monthly meetings since July 2009. Agendas and materials used in discussions are posted on a K-12 Data Governance web page on the OSPI website.

P-20 Data Governance is in the hands of ERDC. House Bill 2261 assigns ERDC the task of identifying critical research and policy questions to be addressed by ERDC as well as the data needed to address the questions. In addition, ERDC is to provide the K-12 Data Governance Group a list of data elements and data quality improvements that are necessary to answer the research and policy questions identified by ERDC. Also, ERDC is to monitor and evaluate the education data collection systems of the organizations and agencies represented in the education data center ensuring that data systems are flexible, able to adapt to evolving needs for information.

Two groups that contribute to ERDC data governance structure are already in existence:

- The Agency Directors Advisory group consists of agency directors from each of ERDC partner agencies. This group ensures that any agency-specific issues encountered within each project are reviewed and handled appropriately.
- Because ESP-20 is a research-oriented data system, many of the technical issues (data dictionary, etc.) are handled within the source systems and discussed across agencies

within ERDC Technical Advisory Group. This group is comprised of program managers, researchers, and information technology staff of the P-20 agencies. Technical aspects of data governance, such as the development of the P-20 data dictionary, are coordinated with this group. This group will also respond to inquiries about data availability received from the P-20 Data Governance Group, described in the following sections.

Many data governance issues in the P-20 arena will be addressed within K-12 by the Data Governance Group convened by OSPI. K-12 data and analysis forms the core of P-20, and most significant longitudinal issues addressed by P-20 systems involve some aspect of the K-12 world. For this reason, the activities of a formal P-20 Data Governance Group will begin on July 1, 2011.

The P-20 Data Governance Group will operate in parallel with the K-12 Data Governance Group, and in connection with ERDC Technical Advisory Group. In addition to participants from ERDC partner agencies, membership will include representatives from the early learning community, school districts (teachers, counselors and principals, administrators), career and technical education at all levels, higher education institutions (institutional researchers, administrators, representatives from schools of education), the State Legislature, and private non-profit organizations focusing on various P-20 transitions.

This group will focus on the tasks assigned to ERDC by House Bill 2261:

- 1) Identify critical research questions and the data needed from all systems to address them; and
- 2) Provide input to the K-12 Data Governance Group and to all other education data systems of the state regarding data elements and data quality improvements necessary to answer the research and policy questions of greatest importance in improving student achievement in the state.

Another responsibility of this group is to assist ERDC in efforts to promote a culture of data use by assisting in the design of useful data-based informational products (including published reports, online reporting tools, and research data sets).

Because of the potentially large size of this organization, the group's work will be broken out into focus areas, to include the following:

- Pre-Kindergarten to early grades
- High school and beyond (transitions from high school to further education and workforce)
- College and beyond (studies of college completers and leavers and subsequent enrollment and workforce participation)
- The teacher pipeline (teacher supply, workforce characteristics, retention, demand)
- Social services-education linkages

3. Please verify that your state included the negotiated restricted indirect cost rate in your proposal.

For the majority of the proposal, an indirect cost rate of 10% was included because the Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) does not have a negotiated indirect cost rate. The negotiated restricted indirect cost rate of 11.4% was used for funding that will stay with the state education agency.

4. The state has not committed any funds. How would the system be maintained after grant?

Please see the attached letter from Stan Marshburn, Deputy Director of the Washington State Office of Financial Management, the Governor's budget office and administrative home of the Education Research and Data Center (ERDC). The answer below expands on the letter from Mr. Marshburn.

The state has been committing funds to the effort of building a student longitudinal data system since 2007 and these funds will maintain the system after the grant.

ERDC came as a result of Washington Learns, an eighteen month review of Washington's entire education system led by Governor Chris Gregoire. The legislation creating ERDC was deliberate in making the Center an authorized representative of the education agencies and includes the Employment Security Department, the steward for employment data, as part of the P-20 system. Since 2007, ERDC has been working with state agencies to begin the work of tracking student outcomes and transitions across sectors.

In the 2007-09 biennium, the Legislature committed \$800,000 to ERDC to begin this work and committed an additional \$200,000 in the 2009-11 biennium to lead the statewide data governance effort. These investments fund the work described in the "Current Status" column of the table in Appendix C, "ERDC Work Before and After Three Years of Grant Funding" (included at the end of this document). While work is getting completed, the process is mostly ad hoc.

Since the creation of ERDC, state government and education agencies, private four-year institutions of higher education and the Employment Security Department have worked together to determine how to share data in ways that does not violate state or federal privacy laws and how to use the data in a longitudinal way to improve the education system. This is evidence that the state commitment to a P-20 longitudinal data system extends beyond the budgetary appropriation to ERDC and OSPI.

After the grant, the products and processes described in the "After" column of the "ERDC Work Before and After Three Years of Grant Funding" table will provide current staff an efficient system to meet the data needs of data users and decision makers at the state and local levels. The time staff currently spends on ad hoc tasks, such as data linking and reporting, will be used to perform research or create data sets to answer new questions. In addition, monetary efficiencies will be realized by education agencies that currently contract out for linking and reporting

services. The plan submitted in the grant application was built on the idea that the infrastructure and research capabilities would be sustainable within existing resources.

Washington committed to the idea of a student longitudinal data system years ago because state and local leaders believe using data will lead to better decisions at each level. The state created and funded ERDC to facilitate this process and ERDC will maintain ESP-20 after the grant.

cc: Bob Butts, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

ERDC Work Before and After Three Years of Grant Funding

Outcome	Current Status	After
1 Data Governance	Individual data sharing agreements between ERDC and partner agencies. No centralized process for multi-agency use.	Centralization of multiple-agency data sharing agreements, data use and review process, and establishment of a data request process.
2 Reporting and Analysis	Summary reports, including feedback reports and research briefs, generated ad hoc.	Standard reports and analytical products designed to inform policy and practice for a variety of decision-makers.
2 Research Data Sets	Generated ad hoc.	A data warehouse environment with data marts that facilitate research, reporting, and ad hoc queries.
2 Workforce Connections	Documentation of employment data processes for assessment of outcomes not widely available.	Employment data handbook that outlines procedures for use in WA and other states.
2 Social Service Connections	Ad hoc connections.	Research on the educational outcomes of program participants.
3 Data Validation and Integration	Time-consuming, non-standardized data validation, scrubbing operations and file merges.	Increased automation in data warehouse using universal data standards and definitions and a standardized database structure.
3 Longitudinal Transforms	Time-consuming, non-standardized derivation of longitudinal data elements.	Automated processes for deriving longitudinal data elements using universal data standards and definitions.
3 Ad Hoc Query Access	Using local tools only (e.g., SAS, Visual Studio).	Global query access to comprehensive data sets in data warehouse using common query tool.
3 User Documentation	No centralized data dictionary for P-20 longitudinal research available to researchers.	Global data dictionary for P-20 longitudinal research that contains universal data standards and definitions that crosswalk agency-specific standards and definitions.
4 Inter-operability	No current systems interoperability. Data transfers of standardized and non-standardized files, validation and integration mostly ad hoc.	Frameworks and procedures in place for the efficient exchange of data between the P-20 data warehouse and other data systems.
5 Source System Enhancements	Currently public postsec. data stored in 2 separate systems. No capability for centralized early learning student info. system. Several legacy systems in need of upgrade or replacement for efficient exchange of P-20 data.	Integrated 2- and 4-year postsec. data; early learning student info. system capable of including all early learners; migration of comm. and tech. colleges data system to SQL; improved data collection of students attending private career schools and non-credit programs.